

## Guidelines for procedures in cases of cheating or an attempt to cheat on examinations at the Norwegian School of Sports Sciences (NSSS)

The Norwegian School of Sports Sciences (NSSS) takes cheating very seriously. Cheating or an attempt to cheat violates the trust between the student and the School, and constitutes an act of disloyalty towards one's fellow students. Cheating or an attempt to cheat must be addressed with strict sanctions out of consideration for other students, future employers and the reputation of NSSS as an educational institution.

Both cheating and an attempt to cheat (hereafter referred to as "cheating") may have serious consequences for the student. The examination in question may be annulled, and the student who has cheated may be excluded from the School for one or two semesters. The student may also lose the right to sit for examinations at other universities and university colleges during the same time period.

These guidelines consist of the following sections:

- 1 What constitutes, or may constitute, cheating, with examples provided
- 2 Procedures in cases of cheating, and the student's rights and obligations
- 3 Basis in legislation

### 1 What constitutes, or may constitute, cheating

Cheating is defined as the violation of the rules for examination procedures which may unfairly lead to a more favourable assessment of the student's results than would otherwise be the case. Cheating may occur:

- When gaining admission to a course or registering for an examination
- While attending a course
- While taking an examination
- Before the examination has been assessed

Cheating while taking an examination is calculated from the point in time when the student begins his or her efforts to satisfy any pre-requisites for taking the examination (e.g. submission of work/educational requirements and compulsory assignments, completion of mandatory course attendance or practical training) until the point in time when the student has taken the examination in its entirety.

#### Examples of cheating

Examinations may be divided into two groups: those which are monitored and those which are not monitored, such as a master's thesis, take-home examination and the like. The following list of examples is not exhaustive, and other circumstances may also be regarded as cheating or an attempt to cheat.

#### *A. Monitored examinations*

Students are not permitted to bring along or use reference materials or technical aids other than those specified in the examination paper or stated in the course description. It will be regarded as cheating or an attempt to cheat if the student brings along or neglects to remove unapproved reference materials or technical aids before the examination begins. It will also be regarded as cheating if the unapproved reference materials or technical aids are available outside of the examination room, e.g. hidden in the restroom.

Unapproved reference materials and technical aids may include:

- \* loose sheets or slips of paper containing information relevant to the course material
- \* separate sheets of paper with pre-prepared written text
- \* course books and other relevant textbooks
- \* calculator or PC with more functions than permitted
- \* mobile telephone and other electronic communication devices

### ***B. Unmonitored examinations***

It is important that students learn how to use sources and references. They also must be aware of the rules that apply for the use of sources and that if they neglect to provide proper citations, they may be suspected of cheating. It is each student's responsibility to be familiar with the rules for the use of sources.

Cheating on an unmonitored examination may include submission of an answer that:

- \* either partially or wholly has been written by another person;
- \* either partially or wholly has been used by the student or another person on a previous examination;
- \* is based on false data;
- \* in a group examination situation, has not been prepared by all the group members;
- \* is taken partially or wholly from the Internet, course books, textbooks or the like and which is presented without citations or a clear indication that the material is a paraphrase/quotation and which is represented as the student's own work.

## **2 Procedures in cases of cheating; the student's rights and obligations**

### **The School has a duty to inform – the student has a duty to be informed**

A lack of knowledge of the rules regarding cheating does not exempt the student from her or his responsibility. Information about regulations and use of sources is provided in the NSSS student handbook. Information about regulations is also stated in the student's study contract. When students submit unmonitored written papers, they must sign and attach a statement confirming that they have understood their rights and obligations.

### **PROCEDURES**

Information in cases involving a suspicion of cheating is exempted from public disclosure, cf. Section 5a of the Freedom of Information Act. The individual case administrator and all those who come in contact with the case have a duty of confidentiality, cf. Section 13 of the Public Administration Act. As a general rule, the written form of all relevant material is to be used as the basis for procedures in such cases.

#### **A. Suspicion of cheating**

When a student is suspected of cheating (before, during or after an examination), he or she will be informed of this. If the student wishes, he or she may complete the examination as planned. When a suspicion of cheating arises, the person who suspects the student of cheating is obligated to immediately:

- Seize any evidence; unapproved reference materials and technical aids are to be confiscated in a manner that avoids unnecessary disruption.
- Write down the important incidents and times; the documentation must be as thorough and exact as possible and must include all documents relevant to the case. These may include:
  - Examination questions, examination answers, sheets of paper, etc.
  - Documents used in the alleged cheating incident, such as unapproved slips of paper, notes, other students' answers, etc.
  - Reports and explanations from persons relevant to the case, such as examination monitors, examiners and student(s).

#### **B. Investigation of the case**

The person who suspects a student of cheating must immediately give oral or written notification of this to the executive officer in charge of examinations in the Study Department. Both the person who suspects that cheating has occurred and the Study Department have a joint responsibility for bringing all of the facts of the case to light.

The procedures for investigating a case of cheating are as follows:

- The examination answer will be assessed in the usual way, but the student will **not** be informed of the mark awarded.
- The student will be summoned to a meeting in which the student is informed of the School's suspicion that cheating has occurred and the reason for its suspicion.
- The student will be informed about further procedures in the case.
- The student will be given a three-week deadline in which to submit a written response to the charge.
- The student may seek assistance from a lawyer or other spokesperson during all stages of the procedures; cf. Section 12, first paragraph, of the Public Administration Act.

### **C. Appeals committee**

If based on the information in the case the director finds that a case of cheating is to be brought before the School's appeals committee, the following procedures will apply:

- The mark awarded will be kept secret until the appeals committee has taken a decision.
- The student will be given written notification in advance if a recommendation for annulment of the examination and for possible exclusion from NSSS will be brought to the School's appeals committee.
- From the date when a case of exclusion is opened, the student has the right to receive compensation from the School (in accordance with established government rates) for the legal fees he or she incurs, cf. Section 4–8 of the Act relating to universities and university colleges.
- The student and her or his spokesperson or lawyer have the right to meet with the appeals committee and explain the student's position in the case.
- The appeals committee is responsible for taking a decision regarding the case. The annulment of an examination requires a simple majority vote, whereas exclusion requires a two-thirds majority vote.

If the School's appeals committee finds that the student has not cheated, the following procedures will apply:

- The student will receive the examination mark.
- The appeals committee may decide that the student will be allowed to retake the examination if the suspicion of cheating may have had an impact on the student's performance during the examination.

If the School's appeals committee finds that the student has cheated, the following procedures will apply:

- The student will not receive the examination mark. Although the student has no knowledge of the mark, he or she will be registered as having attempted an examination.
- The student may elect to appeal a decision taken by the School's appeals committee to the national appeals board, cf. Section 3–7, no. 3 of the Act relating to universities and university colleges.

## **3 Basis in legislation**

The Act of 1 April 2005 no. 15 relating to universities and university colleges contains the following provisions regarding annulment and exclusion:

Section 4–7. *Annulment of examinations or tests*

(1) The board itself or the board's appeals committee, cf. Section 5–1, may annul an examination or test or recognition of a course if the student:

a) by using a false diploma or by other dishonest means, has gained admission to the examination or test or to attend the course concerned,

b) has attempted to cheat or wilfully or through gross negligence has cheated in the course of or prior to the final assessment of the examination or test concerned, or while taking the course in question.

(2) The board itself or the institution's appeals committee, cf. Section 5-1, may annul credit for or recognition of a course or exemption from an examination or test if the student obtained it by using a false diploma or by other dishonest means.

(3) Annulment decisions pursuant to the first and second paragraph may be appealed to the Ministry or to a special appeals body appointed by the Ministry, cf. Section 5-1, seventh paragraph.

(4) The right to annulment has no time limit.

(5) An annulment decision entails an obligation to return any diplomas or mark transcripts to the institution. If such diploma or mark transcript is not returned to the institution at the proper time, the institution may obtain the assistance of an enforcement officer ("namsmann") to secure its return, pursuant to the provisions laid down in Chapter 13 of the Enforcement Act.

(...)

(7) Other institutions under the present Act may be informed of the annulment of an examination or test. The Ministry issues specific provisions concerning information routines, etc.

#### Section 4-8. *Exclusion*

(3) A student who has behaved as described in Section 4-7, first or second paragraph, if the board itself or the institution's appeals committee so decides, cf. Section 5-1, may be excluded from the institution and deprived of the right to sit examinations at institutions under this Act for up to one year. The Ministry issues specific provisions concerning information routines, etc.